



Fire Fighting Protocol for Indiana National Guard Helicopters.

June 2007

The following information is meant to help the emergency response agencies throughout Indiana with guidelines for the request and response of the Indiana National Guard Black Hawk Helicopters for fire suppression water drops.

1. All response requests for Indiana National Guard resources must start with notification to the Indiana Department of Homeland Security. Please utilize the 24hr dispatch center for your request at **1-800-669-7362**.
2. IDHS will determine, based on the information received, whether or not Indiana National Guard helicopters will be used. If IDHS requests Indiana National Guard assets, no cost is passed along to local or county agencies, except as noted in paragraph 7.
3. For use of the National Guard helicopters, one or more of the following criteria must be in place:
 - a. **Lives must be in danger.** The lives of firefighters or civilians must be in extreme danger with no other rescue or protection available.
 - b. **Inhabitable structures must be in danger.** Houses or other structures that are inhabitable on a regular bases in danger without other protection available.
 - c. **Other requests.** All other requests will be reviewed on a case by case basis with priority given to those with the highest threat to public health and safety.
4. **TIME DELAYS:** One of the considerations is the launch time and flight time from the Indiana National Guard Army Aviation Flight Facility to the emergency scene.
 - a. The launch time includes travel time for the pilots, load time for the Bambi-Bucket, and pre-flight check out of the aircraft. If the request is after duty hours then the launch may be delayed as much as 1 to 2 hours. During normal duty hours 0700 -1600 hours, Mon-Fri the time to launch aircraft may be as short as 45 minutes.

- b. The flight time to the emergency scene will be determined by the weather conditions and the distance traveled. The aircraft has a flight speed of 140 MPH with little or no head winds.
- 5. **SUPPORT NEEDS:** On scene resources necessary to support the Indiana National Guard helicopters must be preplanned prior to the arrival of the aircraft on scene:
 - a. A landing zone (LZ) must be established if possible. Due to the large size of the Black Hawk helicopters this area must be a minimum of 250 ft. square and no overhead obstructions. This area will be used to offload the National Guard ground control officers and to setup and re-supply the onboard class (A) foam system.
 - b. The 660 gallon Bambi-Buckets need a water source that is a minimum of 6 ft. deep with a surface area of no less than 1/2 acre with no overhead obstructions. Verbal permission, followed up by written permission, to utilize the water source must be obtained from the owner prior to beginning the operation. The water source must be as close as possible to the emergency scene. Less than 5 miles is preferred.
- 6. **SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS:**
 - a. The actual water drops can only be made during daylight hours for flight crew safety considerations.
 - b. The flight path from the water source to the scene should not over-fly houses buildings or traffic, in the event they are forced to emergency jettison the Bambi-Bucket with a weight of 5,200 Lbs.
 - c. All nonessential personnel must be clear of the drop areas due to the danger from the weight of the water. Security of the area must be maintained to keep out civilian onlookers.
- 7. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT:** The local government entity will be responsible for :
 - a. Replacement cost of any class (A) foam if used on scene.
 - b. Cost of billeting the flight crews if necessary.

For additional information contact Indiana Department of Homeland Security Operations @ 1-800-669-7362